

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 7, 2023

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

RE: In Support of the State of Connecticut's request for a Secretarial Disaster Declaration

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

We write to you in strong support of the request for a Secretarial Disaster Designation put forth by Governor Ned Lamont on May 25th, 2023. This designation would cover Fairfield, Hartford, Litchfield, Middlesex, New London, New Haven, Tolland, and Windham Counties in response to serious harm to crops across the state incurred by the recent frost on May 18th, 2023.

On the morning of May 18th farms throughout Connecticut recorded sub-freezing temperatures for up to five hours, causing widespread damage to countless crops in crucial points in their growing seasons; including strawberries, blueberries, grapes, peaches, cherries, pears, apples, Christmas trees, and a host of other nursery crops. Given the timing of this weather event, Connecticut's agricultural producers will not be able to recover their losses for the season, leading to an estimated \$3.3 million dollars in losses thus far.


The USDA Farm Service Agency has been working diligently to capture losses across the state—as of this date, the agency has recorded 40 different farms located in all eight counties reporting losses spanning nearly six hundred acres. The Connecticut FSA team will continue to work to record additional losses as damage becomes more evident in the coming weeks and anticipates the number of losses to continue to grow.

A Secretarial Disaster Designation will make available resources to these impacted producers, such as low-interest USDA Farm Service Agency emergency loans, that are vital to the recovery process from the May 18th frost. The Connecticut delegation strongly supports the Governor's request for this designation and thanks you for your time and attention to this important matter.

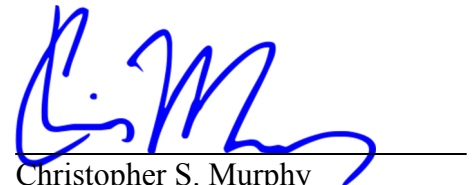
Sincerely,




Joe Courtney
Member of Congress




Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



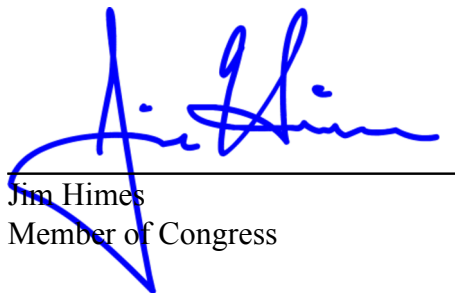
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



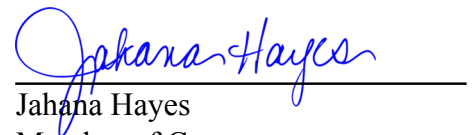
Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Jim Himes
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress